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to triumph in their mission. Superhuman tasks need not daunt supernatural men! Hence, their lives were perpetual manifestations of the conquest of the "unconquerable," the achievement of the "impossible." In God they triumphed, they joyed with joy unspeakable, they sang and fought, and fought and sang their victorious way to heaven, for in them, and with them by day and by night throughout all the fiery episodes of life, was the ineffable glory of the divine presence.

I have a friend who purchased for his little boys a dissected map of the world upon which the little fellows worked long and were upon the point of giving it up when one of them discovered that on the back of the map was the figure of a man, and falling to with eagerness they easily put the map together by building up the figure of the man. Thank God, we are getting to see from every angle, scientific, historic, philosophic, as well as religious, that we can solve none of life's mys-

tery without the great figure of God. God in nature, God in history, God in human consciousness, God in His word, God in Jesus Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, God by His Spirit in the midst of His church and in the hearts of His people—these are the solutions of the world problems against which intellectual and spiritual curiosity has beaten in vain. To know Him and to fellowship with Him is the secret of power. It is the essence of the gospel message. To know Him is life eternal; to walk with Him is life's perpetual dynamic; to joy in Him is life's supreme ecstasy. The Church is rallying as it must rally for the final struggle and final victory under the call of the Holy Ghost. His dispensation is here, but is to come in fulness of power. We are relearning the old lessons of Peniel and Pentecost that they who wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength. The preaching of a renaissance of prayer, and faith and love, and holy living will prelude the day of the Church's ultimate victory.

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## LINCOLN: THE MAN AND HIS MESSAGE\*

THE REV. S. ARCHIBALD PARSONS, M.A., DARWEN, ENGLAND

ABRAHAM LINCOLN was said by Walt Whitman to be "the grandest figure yet on all the canvas of the nineteenth century." The estimate can not be far out and it is small wonder that the American people think of him along with George Washington as the heroic type of their race.

By voicing, defending, incarnating the ideal of their constitution as no leader had done before him, he is still known as "the first American." But in spirit, in his love of liberty, and in the confidence he reposed in the people, he belongs to the human race, for like Mazzini he believed that "the cause of popular emancipation throughout the whole world was one."

Beginning a poor lad in a rude log cabin, he died a willing martyr to freedom's cause at the hand of a mad assassin while President of his own beloved Republic and resident at the White House. But his special claim to fame rests not so much upon the fact that he went from "Log cabin to White House," but rather upon the masterly way in which he handled the ship of state when tempest threatened shipwreck every day. Surely never was individual genius more

powerfully demonstrated than when he turned political difficulties into the opportunity for scoring perhaps the greatest personal triumph of modern history. In physique as well as character he may be said to have been extraordinary. Standing six feet four inches in height he cut an awkward, angular, grotesque figure. His large features were out of all proportion, from the enormous ears to the strong nose projecting prominently, giving a touch of alertness to an otherwise powerful face.

But the chief feature of the face, as indeed of every face, was the eye, which now blazed with the fires of a prophet of doom and now reflected the far horizons of the seer's vision.

It was a strange but striking figure. No wonder the carnal English journalist saw in him, as he awkwardly ambled abroad with his stove-pipe hat on the back of his head, the original itself of the European caricatures of Uncle Sam and Brother Jonathan.

Let us consider some of the many characteristics that help to explain the man, his popularity, and the indelible mark he left upon the most blood-dyed page in his country's history. First in order I would place

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\* Preached to young people.

his unwearied ambition. From the beginning the odds were against him. He had literally no education. He was driven to hard manual labor at an age when children now are still in the kindergarten stage. His hours of work were long, from dawn to dusk, and, even had his time been less occupied, there were few facilities in the way of books for self-improvement. But a man of Lincoln's temper was not to be gainsaid. Instead, therefore, of standing idle, discouraged because his way was hard, Lincoln made ready for the struggle that was to land him in the seats of the mighty.

He had a remarkable memory and never counted the cost of knowledge. He would stay up till the others had gone to rest, and there by the dull light of the dying embers of the rude log fire he would do his arithmetic exercises, writing with a burnt stick on a wooden shovel.

Young man, I commend this splendid story to you. You, alas, have no such stimulating struggle to make. There are to your hand wide-open doors leading you into that temple of knowledge which in its turn is the outer porch of the temple of fame. Lincoln had no higher-education classes to satisfy his hunger for learning—you have. Then use them. As for Lincoln, quite early in life, he realized that a man can give out only what he takes in; so we find him eagerly devouring all the books he could reach. They were few but rare, and as he assimilated their teaching he grew in breadth, depth, and strength. "Robinson Crusoe," "Æsop's Fables," life of Henry Clay, life of George Washington, "Pilgrim's Progress," and the Bible—these he read and reread, and, apart altogether from the moral tonic of such a course of reading, there can be no doubt at all that his command in later life of a stately nervous English may be traced to this early apprenticeship.

Young men, the curse of to-day is that there is far too much to read; the range is too wide; the quality is too poor. Feed your minds, as Lincoln did, with food that will sustain and stimulate. Read few books rather than many, but let those few be "masters."

Then I am struck with Lincoln's unspoiled simplicity. He came from the people and to the end he was always one of the people. He honored the rock from which he was hewn and to his early associates he remained "Old Father Abe" to the end.

How refreshing to meet an official who does not become officious. This man was great enough to be natural.

We need not wonder that he was the despair of the professional courtier. He simply could not pose. Do you love him less because he retained unspoiled his native simplicity? Fancy the President sitting on a stone coping outside the White House writing and signing an official document! The "Prince Charlies" of Washington society doubtless were mortally wounded, but America soon realized that if she had a President who could not wear a suit of clothes gracefully or receive his guests with the elaborate courtesy of a European court, still she had a man strong enough to carry the weight of a nation divided against itself and to do it almost alone. Had he been less simple, he had been less strong and less self-reliant.

A marked feature of Lincoln's character was his genuine love for his fellows. He made no distinction between rich and poor, no, nor between slave and freeman, black or white. "God made all men and He made them equal"—that was his life's motto.

You have only to study the "color problem" of that period to realize the daring of the man. Even to-day, Theodore Roosevelt, Lincoln's political son, has had to face the seven furies of American color prejudice, and, like Lincoln, has been courageous enough to suffer the displeasure of society in his resolve to be true to his own manhood.

Read the story of Lincoln's entry into Richmond after its fall. There are surely few more touching paragraphs in the whole human story than the welcome the negroes gave him. Up went hats, bonnets, and handkerchiefs, as they clapped their hands and sang "Glory to God, Glory, Glory," "Thank you, dear Jesus, that I behold President Linkum," said an old negress as he passed. After a while he halted to rest, and an old negro, removing his hat and bowing, said, "Good Lord bress you, President Linkum." Instantly Lincoln removed his own hat and bowed in silence. It was the act of a courageous Christian gentleman, yet a woman was heard to say in comment on the scene, "Recognize a nigger! Faugh!"

On another occasion they told him of a mother who had lost five sons in the war, and instantly he put State work aside to write a word of comfort to the stricken mother; and what restful words they were:

"I feel how weak and fruitless must be any words of mine which should attempt to beguile you from the grief of a loss so overwhelming. But I can not refrain from tendering to you the consolation that may be found in the thanks of the Republic they died to save. I pray that our Heavenly Father may assuage the anguish of your bereavement and leave you only the cherished memory of the loved and lost and the solemn pride that must be yours to have laid so costly a sacrifice upon the altar of freedom."

The heart source from which so pure a stream of sympathy could spring must itself have been pure and undefiled.

Let me further claim for him what all too seldom can be justly claimed for other men in positions of power and influence—an incorruptible integrity. Away back in his early days we find him sensitive on points of honor. They tell how he walked miles in order to repay pennies which had been paid him over the store counter in error; and later they tell how he accepted as a moral obligation the debts of his firm when it failed, altho his scoundrelly partner repudiated any claim, legal or moral.

Again, when he began to practise law we find him refusing lucrative work because he could not honestly plead. Unless he was genuinely persuaded of his clients' rights he invariably declined service. Whatever may be said to-day of this attitude as to its worldly wisdom or otherwise, this much is clear—the man who without pressure and almost without precedent is willing to make such sacrifice is possess of a moral ideal that will render him immune and incorruptible in wider fields of public service. And it did.

His attitude upon the slave question, that all-absorbing problem of the period, reflects at once a rare political sagacity and a lofty moral courage. Lincoln, for the time, pinned his faith to the Missouri Compromise that defined a line of division between the slave States in the South and the free States in the North.

Passionate abolitionist as he was at heart, he had need to be a strong man to take the half-way line. It exposed him to bitter attack and cruel misrepresentation at the hands of both the pro-slavery party and the abolitionists. But nothing mattered to him so long as he was persuaded his policy was right, wise, and practicable. And even when John Brown failed in his sincere but misguided

tactics and paid for failure with his life, Abraham Lincoln felt it his duty politically to repudiate a man whom personally he held in honor and esteem. And so, too, when he issued his famous proclamation of emancipation on January 1, 1863, he was left alone. On all sides his action was considered premature and likely to disturb the Republic's relations with foreign powers. But no one could move him. We can imagine how Tammany Hall would have struggled to buy his support, and doubtless efforts were made to buy him off; but you might as reasonably expect to blast the face of Gibraltar rock with a child's popgun as to move Lincoln by the promise of gold. James Bryce, writing of Lincoln, says, "There is a vulgar saying that all great men are unscrupulous. Lincoln's is one of the careers that refutes this imputation on human nature. The main-spring of his power and the truest evidence of his greatness lay in the nobility of his aims, the fervor of his conviction, and the stainless rectitude which won for him the confidence of the people."

As a man of speech we find Lincoln standing high among the rare company of natural orators. He could suit himself and his style to special conditions as very few have done. The fickle mob, the reluctant and impatient jury, the biased judge, the prejudiced senate, the great mercurial national assemblies all fell before the wizardry of his tongue. But of all the extant examples of his eloquence I know of nothing that rings more true than his address at the dedication of the National Cemetery at Gettysburg on November 19, 1863. It stands as a piece of unsurpassable oratory. Its inevitable phraseology, its stately, dignified movement, and its undertone of tender human sympathy place it among the great spoken masterpieces of the world.

The special characteristic that I regard as the deep underlying controlling principle of Lincoln's life was his natural piety. They tell us that as he did not express his faith in the orthodox terminology of the day he was therefore no Christian. Young men and women, we need not be alarmed, for Abraham Lincoln himself declared his readiness to join any Christian Church whose sole condition of membership was exprest in the words, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy soul . . . and thy neighbor as thyself." What more did he need to confess? One

greater than Lincoln said, "This do and thou shalt live."

As you read his story, his simple trust in God, belief in prayer, and love for the Bible remind you of Oliver Cromwell and the stern old Puritans.

Of his reliance on prayer let me quote the following, "He had gone to his room and prayed mightily for a victory. 'I told God,' he said, 'that if we were to win the battle He must do it, for I had done all I could. I told Him our cause was His cause and after that the strong comfort crept into my soul that things would be all right.'"

At another time he said, "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the

overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go."

In his farewell address at Springfield he said, "Without the assistance of that divine Being who ever attended Washington I can not succeed. With that assistance I can not fail."

Let no man therefore deny to him the full fellowship of the Spirit he unquestionably enjoyed. Nay, rather note this fact—the key to his whole career is in his trust to God, in his conviction that he had been specially commissioned of God, and in his controlling sense of destiny.

This then is the man, great because good, beloved of the people because he believed in the people.

## ABRAHAM LINCOLN\*

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

WE have met here to celebrate the hundredth anniversary of the birth of one of the two greatest Americans; of one of the two or three greatest men of the nineteenth century; of one of the greatest men in the world's history. This rail-splitter, this boy who passed his ungainly youth in the dire poverty of the poorest of the frontier folk, whose rise was by weary and painful labor, lived to lead his people through the burning flames of a struggle from which the nation emerged, purified as by fire, born anew to a loftier life. After long years of iron effort, and of failure that came more often than victory, he at last rose to the leadership of the republic, at the moment when that leadership had become the stupendous world-task of the time. He grew to know greatness, but never ease. Success came to him, but never happiness, save that which springs from doing well a painful and a vital task. Power was his, but not pleasure. The furrows deepened on his brow, but his eyes were undimmed by either hate or fear. His gaunt shoulders were bowed, but his steel thews never faltered as he bore for a burden the destinies of his people. His great and tender heart shrank from giving pain; and the task allotted him was to pour out like water the life-blood of the young men, and to feel in his every fiber the sorrow of the women. Disaster saddened but never dismayed him. As the red years of war went by they found him ever doing his duty in the present, ever facing the future

with fearless front, high of heart and dauntless of soul. Unbroken by hatred, unshaken by scorn, he worked and suffered for the people. Triumph was his at the last; and barely had he tasted it before murder found him, and the kindly, patient, fearless eyes were closed forever.

As a people we are indeed beyond measure fortunate in the characters of the two greatest of our public men, Washington and Lincoln. Widely tho they differed in externals, the Virginia landed gentleman and the Kentucky backwoodsman, they were alike in essentials, they were alike in the great qualities which made each able to do service to his nation and to all mankind such as no other man of his generation could or did render. Each had lofty ideals, but each in striving to attain these lofty ideals was guided by the soundest common sense. Each possessed inflexible courage in adversity, and a soul wholly unspoiled by prosperity. Each possessed all the gentler virtues commonly exhibited by good men who lack rugged strength of character. Each possessed also all the strong qualities commonly exhibited by those towering masters of mankind who have too often shown themselves devoid of so much as the understanding of the words by which we signify the qualities of duty, of mercy, of devotion to the right, of lofty disinterestedness in battling for the good of others. There have been other men as great and other men as good; but in all the history of mankind there

\*An Address at Lincoln's Birthplace, Feb. 12, 1909.

are no other two great men as good as these, no other two good men as great. Widely tho the problems of to-day differ from the problems set for solution to Washington when he founded this nation, to Lincoln when he saved it and freed the slave, yet the qualities they showed in meeting these problems are exactly the same as those we should show in doing our work to-day.

Lincoln saw into the future with the prophetic imagination usually vouchsafed only to the poet and the seer. He had in him all the lift toward greatness of the visionary, without any of the visionary's fanaticism or egotism, without any of the visionary's narrow jealousy of the practical man and inability to strive in practical fashion for the realization of an ideal. He had the practical man's hard common sense and willingness to adapt means to ends; but there was in him none of that morbid growth of mind and soul which blinds so many practical men to the higher things of life. No more practical man ever lived than this homely backwoods idealist; but he had nothing in common with those practical men whose consciences are warped until they fail to distinguish between good and evil, fail to understand that strength, ability, shrewdness, whether in the world of business or of politics, only serve to make their possessor a more noxious, a more evil, member of the community if they are not guided and controlled by a fine and high moral sense.

We of this day must try to solve many social and industrial problems, requiring to an especial degree the combination of indomitable resolution with cool-headed sanity. We can profit by the way in which Lincoln used both these traits as he strove for reform. We can learn much of value from the very attacks which, following that course, brought upon his head, attacks alike by the extremists of revolution and by the extremists of reaction. He never wavered in devotion to his principles, in his love for the Union, and in his abhorrence of slavery. Timid and lukewarm people were always denouncing him because he was too extreme; but as a matter of fact he never went to extremes, he worked step by step; and because of this the extremists hated and denounced him with a fervor which now seems to us fantastic in its deification of the unreal and the impossible. At the very time when one side was holding him up as the apostle of

social revolution because he was against slavery, the leading abolitionist denounced him as the "slave hound of Illinois." When he was the second time candidate for President, the majority of his opponents attacked him because of what they termed his extreme radicalism, while a minority threatened to bolt his nomination because he was not radical enough. He had continually to check those who wished to go forward too fast, at the very time that he overrode the opposition of those who wished not to go forward at all. The goal was never dim before his vision; but he picked his way cautiously, without either halt or hurry, as he strode toward it, through such a morass of difficulty that no man of less courage would have attempted it, while it would surely have overwhelmed any man of judgment less serene.

Yet perhaps the most wonderful thing of all, and, from the standpoint of the America of to-day and of the future, the most vitally important was the extraordinary way in which Lincoln could fight valiantly against what he deemed wrong and yet preserve undiminished his love and respect for the brother from whom he differed. In the hour of a triumph that would have turned any weaker man's head, in the heat of a struggle which spurred many a good man to dreadful vindictiveness, he said truthfully that so long as he had been in his office he had never willingly planted a thorn in any man's bosom, and besought his supporters to study the incidents of the trial through which they were passing as philosophy from which to learn wisdom and not as wrongs to be avenged; ending with the solemn exhortation that, as the strife was over, all should reunite in a common effort to save their common country.

He lived in days that were great and terrible, when brother fought against brother for what each sincerely deemed to be the right. In a contest so grim the strong men who alone can carry it through are rarely able to do justice to the deep convictions of those with whom they grapple in mortal strife. At such times men see through a glass darkly; to only the rarest and loftiest spirits is vouchsafed that clear vision which gradually comes to all, even to the lesser, as the struggle fades into distance, and wounds are forgotten, and peace creeps back to the hearts that were hurt. But to Lincoln was given this supreme vision. He did not hate the man from whom

he differed. Weakness was as foreign as wickedness to his strong, gentle nature; but his courage was of a quality so high that it needed no bolstering of dark passion. He saw clearly that the same high qualities, the same courage and willingness for self-sacrifice, and devotion to the right as it was given them to see the right, belonged both to the men of the North and to the men of the South. As the years roll by, and as all of us, where-

ever we dwell, grow to feel an equal pride in the valor and self-devotion, alike of the men who wore the blue and the men who wore the gray, so this whole nation will grow to feel a peculiar sense of pride in the mightiest of the mighty men who mastered the mighty days; the lover of his country and of all mankind; the man whose blood was shed for the union of his people and for the freedom of a race—Abraham Lincoln.

### PRAYER FOR THE NATION

**O**UR FATHER, we rejoice in the great souls whom thou hast given to us as a people. Thou hast apportioned to us a great land, a goodly heritage, among the nations of the earth. We have entered upon our inheritance and possess it. But more than all the treasures of the sea and of the land, thou hast enriched us by noble lives, by men of clear vision, of high courage, of steadfast devotion to freedom and justice and truth. We thank thee for all who have loved righteousness better than life; for those who have counted nothing dear to them when the rights of their fellow men have been invaded. For all the lovers and seers and martyrs of liberty and peace and good-will among men, we give thee thanks. Forbid, our Father, that the vision which enlightened and kindled their hearts should ever grow dim to our eyes. Forbid that the strait and narrow path which they trod should ever seem too hard for us, and we turn aside into byways of ease and self-seeking. Touch our eyes, we pray thee, to behold the glory and the strength of thy prophets while they are yet alive, that we may take their words as accents of thine own Spirit, that we may follow in their footsteps with joyful obedience. Deliver us, Our Father, from the folly of the nations which have loved riches and luxury and the transient glory of power. Save us from that blindness and madness of the peoples who have believed in force for safety, and have taken the sword for defense and aggression. According to thy law, they who have taken the sword, have perished by the sword. Help us to believe in the sufficiency and eternity of righteousness. May we follow with believing hearts and victorious spirits Jesus Christ whom thou hast given, who is this day going forth among the nations, conquering and to conquer, by the might of His goodness and truth and the beauty of His holiness. In His name. Amen.